

State of Missouri PY 2001 Wagner-Peyser Act Agriculture Services Submission

I. Summary of State Plan Requirements

A. Assessment of Need

The peak harvest times are for melons, cotton, peaches in the Bootheel, apples in the Lexington area and vegetable crops in Southwest Missouri. Historically the same seasonal workers are accessed year in and year out for farmworker assistance and as a result, many seasonal workers have adjusted their lives to this cycle.

Missouri's seasonal farmworkers are primarily Caucasian.

Migrant workers are used throughout the summer and fall. These migrant workers are primarily Hispanic. As with other states, there is an ongoing shortage of housing for migrant workers statewide.

It has been noted that many more Missouri employers are seeking to utilize the available migrant workforce, and seeking additional information on laws concerning their hire.

B. Outreach Activity

Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) outreach activity will be the responsibility of the Regional Workforce Development Manager. Missouri is comprised of fourteen regions. Each administrative area will promote services to agricultural employers and workers. Regional Workforce Development Managers have the responsibility to ensure visits to MSFW's, growers and community-based organizations in order to coordinate MSFW assistance.

The Missouri Division of Workforce Development (DWD) will work with partnering agencies such as Rural Missouri Incorporated (RMI) and the Southeast Missouri Health Network to assist in the outreach activities. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been established between the DWD and RMI, which outlines RMI's outreach to MSFW's who are not being reached by normal intake activities of DWD local offices. RMI submits a semi-annual report to DWD regarding their program activities.

An outreach plan, in accordance with 20 CFR 653.107, has been written by the Monitor Advocate and distributed to each local office and each cooperating agency within the State. The separate outreach plan discusses the One-Stop initiative in detail.

A minimum of three visits before, during and after the appropriate seasonal activity are scheduled to occur in each affected local office. Projected visits for each office are as follows:

<u>Local Office</u>	<u>Crop / Process</u>	<u>Season</u>
Sikeston	Row Crops	Summer
Kennett	Peaches, Melons	Summer
Lexington	Apples	Autumn
Monett	Apples	Autumn
Poplar Bluff	Row Crops, Peaches	Summer/Autumn
Cape Girardeau	Row Crops, Apples	Summer/Autumn

C. Wagner-Peyser Act Services Provided to MSFWs through the One-Stop Delivery System

MSFW's will be identified in each DWD local office and the applications coded in accordance with MSFW (20CFR 63.103). These offices will strive to provide equity of services to MSFW's to at least the same degree that each office provides these services to non-MSFW's.

Equity Indicators

- Referred to Job
- Provided some service
- Referred to Supportive Services
- Counseled
- Provided job development

The standard is that four of the five indicators be met. The "counseled" indicator may not be met due to the lack of counselors assigned to rural offices. It is anticipated that there may be some difficulty in meeting the standards largely due to the fact that seasonal farmworkers come in at the end of the season to file for Unemployment Insurance. For the most part, they do not request any other services as they are job attached and will return to work in the spring.

Partnerships at the local level are critical to the MSFW program. Local office personnel as well as the State Monitor Advocate will seek to establish and maintain working partnerships with agricultural employers, and with the migrant and seasonal farmworker population. Input from agricultural employers as well as from migrant seasonal farmworkers will be key factors in improving services to the MSFW population as well as agricultural employers.

One of the challenges of the One-Stop environment is to manage service delivery systems that ensure all customers equitable access to the full range of services available. It has long been acknowledged that MSFW's encounter significant barriers to completing basic educational objectives and to finding sustainable employment that meets the economic needs of raising their families.

Services to MSFWs in a One-Stop setting will be provided in the same manner as services to other populations or target groups.

The first tier of service in a Career Center (One-Stop) is walk-in or self-service. This tier is for those MSFWs who prefer not to have in-depth services provided by our staff.

Some type of assistance may be needed for those who need to utilize guided or group services. Job clubs, instructions for using the job bank and self-registration are some of the services provided at this level.

Staff assisted Core, or Intensive, services are provided for those who need help in completing job applications, require counseling, referrals to supportive services, etc.

A variety of literature regarding specific training and educational opportunities available for the MSFW population will be placed in all Division of Workforce Development local offices.

The availability of electronic resources for the MSFW population will be investigated.

D. Employment Services for Agricultural Employers

Agricultural employers will be encouraged to place job orders with local DWD offices. Agricultural employers will be contacted as part of the MSFW Outreach Program to explain employment services available to them. The DWD staff will actively participate in agricultural meetings and assist employers in recruiting U.S. workers, using the local job bank and the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS).

DWD Workforce Development Specialists will promote services to agricultural employers by utilizing data files available to the labor exchange to target appropriate employers. This staff will also contact agricultural employers in their routine employer visits and solicit job orders and openings, which will be utilized for referral of MSFW's.

E. Other Requirements

1. Status of MSFW Monitor Advocate

The Monitor Advocate position for Missouri is part-time at .4 position. A letter to USDOL will be submitted in conjunction with the state plan requesting that this position continue to be part-time.

2. State Monitor Advocate Approval / Comments

- This plan was written by the Monitor Advocate and has not been changed, amended nor has she been persuaded to change or amend the plan.

- The Monitor Advocate is to carry out the required duties without fear of reprisals from his/her agency or other authorities.
- Consideration of Previous Year's Annual Monitor Advocate Report
- The Monitor Advocate reviewed the 1999 State Plan and intends to follow up on the recommendations.

3. Consideration of Previous Year's Annual MSFW Monitor Advocate Report.

Consideration was given to the State MSFW Monitor Advocate recommendations as presented in the annual MSFW summary developed under 20 CFR 653.108(t).

4. Affirmative Action Plans / Comments

Missouri is not a significant MSFW state and is therefore not required to submit this plan.

5. Review and Comment by WIA 167 Programs:

The WIA Title I Section 167 Program (National Farmworker Jobs Program) has been given a copy of the original plan. Other agencies and organizations will have an opportunity to comment on the plan. As a result of the additional planning requirements under the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 3-90, the National Farmworker Jobs Program will be provided an updated plan for review and comment. If warranted, the plan will be amended to address significant areas of input.

II. Assessment of Need

The number of estimated MSFW's in the state will be determined by the Monitor Advocate based on figures from the Atlas Census (1990); the National Center for Farmworker Health; Rural Missouri Incorporated; Southeast Missouri Health Network services and the Migrant Farmworker Project.

Migrants tend to specialize in agricultural tasks. For instance, those who work cucumbers and peas contract for that task and leave when it is completed. Other groups come in and do melon harvesting, etc. Not all of the migrant farmworkers are in the same area at the same time. Their arrival in a particular area depends on the harvest cycle of crop for which they're contracting. Row crops, fence crops and tree crops have different harvesting times.

A. Review of Previous Year's Agricultural Activity

Melon, peaches and apples crops were fair crops in 2000. Cotton crops were not as productive as prior years due to drought conditions.

B. Review of Previous Year's MSFW Activity in the State

The planting and harvesting of vegetables, melons, peaches, apples and cotton crops in the Bootheel accounted for the much of the labor demands last season. Cotton gins now employ some migrants for six to eight weeks in the fall.

The apple crops in Lafayette County again employed approximately 450 workers this last year, with approximately three orchards utilizing this labor. Lafayette County migrant workers come from all over the U.S. and Mexico. Many of these migrants return to Florida to finish harvesting the citrus crops, or return to Texas or Mexico to await the beginning of the next migrant season. Most migrants move five times per year, but many of these workers in Lafayette County have worked in Missouri's apple crop for ten years. The 2000 harvest was fair so the picking lasted through the middle of October, while the work in the packing sheds continued on through the middle of November.

Estimates of agricultural labor in cotton crops, melon crops, peach, and vegetable crops is approximately 4,000-6,000 in the bootheel area of the state. Estimates of workers per crop is not available, but it is known that apple producers employ approximately 800 to 1000 of these workers statewide.

Labor shortages occur in all of these crop areas.

C. Projected Level of Agricultural Activity Expected in 2001

The level of agricultural activity in Missouri is expected to remain at the same level as in prior years depending on the weather. The weather is a major factor in determining whether the quality and quantity of the crops is satisfactory.

D. Proposed Number of MSFW's in 2001

There are 98,000 farms in Missouri with 25% of these farms hiring farm labor. It is estimated that 4,000-6,000 migrant farmworkers travel to Missouri every year to harvest crops. Most of the migrant farmworkers are located in the Bootheel. The number of hired farmworkers in Missouri is estimated at 71,445, with most of these being seasonal farmworkers ¹.

III. Outreach Activities

¹ Rural Missouri Incorporated Farm Fact Sheet (www.rmiinc.org)

There is a separate outreach plan as outlined in 20 CFR 653.107. MSFW outreach will be conducted to contact agricultural workers outside of the local offices to explain services provided by the Division of Workforce Development. Local office supervisors will be responsible for conducting outreach in their respective area, unless relieved of this requirement by the Monitor Advocate. The local office supervisors will coordinate with other agencies serving the MSFW population in order to maximize all available resources. The Monitor Advocate will assist the local offices when requested to do so or as need arises. It is expected that a need for assistance from the Monitor Advocate will increase due to staff reduction in the local offices. The Regional Monitor Advocate discussed the need for additional assistance from the Monitor Advocate in a Federal review that was conducted in February 1999.

A. Assessment of Available Resources

1. Funds available to operate the MSFW outreach will be part of the Wagner-Peyser funding with 1.45 staff positions allocated, including the Monitor Advocate position. Overall .40 of a position will be used by the Monitor Advocate and 1.05 positions will be used by local office outreach staff.
2. The State agency staff is the same as in prior years.
3. Resources to be Made Available through Existing Cooperative Agreements

The state agency has a formal cooperative agreement with the RMI. We will continue to cooperate with State agencies assisting MSFW's and private agencies to further MSFW causes. RMI has relocated their full service office to Malden in order to better serve the Bootheel region.

The Southeast Missouri Health Network mainly provides health-related services.

The Migrant Farmworkers Project provides a variety of services including health and legal assistance.

Missouri's Outreach Plan created by the Monitor Advocate relates in detail how each cooperative agency operates.

B. Numeric Goals

1. The Division of Workforce Development will pursue a goal of 1100 contacts in the following local offices:

<u>Local Office</u>	<u>No. of Contacts</u>
Monett	100
Sikeston / Cape Girardeau	200
Kennett / Poplar Bluff	200
Lexington	300
Sedalia	200

2. Number of Staff Days Utilized for Outreach by Local Office

<u>Local Office</u>	<u>Days utilized for Outreach</u>
Sedalia	30 days
Lexington	50 days
Sikeston / Cape Girardeau	50 days
Kennett / Poplar Bluff	50 days
Joplin	40 days
Monett	24 days
Central Office	120 days

3. In cooperation with RMI, Migrant Farmworkers Project and the Southeast Missouri Health Network, contacts should total over 2,500. This past year, DWD totaled over 800 contacts in our outreach program.

Southeast Missouri Health Network and the Migrant Farmworkers Project outreach contacts should exceed 1,500.

These contact figures are approximate as efforts are being made to improve partnerships with RMI, Southeast Missouri Health Network, and Legal Aid of Western Missouri.

C. Proposed Outreach Activities

DWD local office staff will contact agricultural employers to locate possible MSFW's. When MSFW's are located, local office staff will request permission to explain services available. Applications will be taken for those who wish to receive services from DWD. Division staff will carry the necessary documentation to identify themselves as DWD representatives. Local office staff will make arrangements with Southeast Missouri Health Network and the Migrant Farmworkers Project staff to coordinate outreach efforts and to facilitate the assistance and utilization of surplus farmworkers.

U.S. workers will be recruited through registration; MSFW outreach efforts will be coordinated with other agencies such as RMI, community action agencies and other service organizations. In addition, a special effort is being made to identify migrant events and get-togethers to further expand our outreach efforts.

IV. Services Provided to MSFW's

Plan Data for Upcoming Year

Planned indicators of compliance goals are expected to be accomplished. At times, the referred to jobs category becomes difficult to realize as workers do not always make themselves available for all services. Lists of registered MSFW's will be forwarded to appropriate local offices for contact and referral services as a concentrated effort to bolster referral percentages.

Significant MSFW Local Office Affirmative Action Plan

Missouri has no significant local office Affirmative Action Plan and is not a significant state.

V. Services Provided to Agricultural Employers

Data Analysis

Previous year's history as of June 30, 2000, provide the following estimates:

- Number of agricultural job order received (estimate): 500 and openings received (estimate): 675
- Number of agricultural job orders filled: 310 (estimate)
- Percent filled rate goal: 62%
- Number of interstate clearance orders received : 2
- Number of interstate clearance order initiated : 0

Plan for Upcoming Year

- Number of agricultural job orders expected to be received: 500
- Number of agricultural job openings projected to be filled: 300
- Percent to be filled: 60%
- Estimated number of interstate clearance orders: 6
- Estimated number of interstate clearance orders the state will initiate: 0

Narrative Description

DWD local office supervisors and Workforce Development Specialists will actively solicit job orders as part of the MSFW outreach effort, and as an activity of the regular labor exchange process.

Identification of agricultural employers who may potentially utilize MSFW's will come as a result of outreach, through assistance from other organizations and through our past experienced with employers.

DWD will utilize established linkages with RMI, Southeast Missouri Health Network Migrant Program, Migrant Education, Migrant Farmworker Project, Southeast Missouri Baptist

Association, Black River Baptist Association and other entities to identify and work with agricultural employers.

The State MSFW Monitor Advocate will:

- Train and supervise all personnel associated with MSFW outreach activity in each local office (20 CFR 653.108(g)(5);
- Monitor State agency activities and liaison with community based organizations to further the welfare of MSFW's (20 CFR 653.108);
- Intensify services during the peak of seasonal activity (May through September) utilizing 70% of the time available;
- Conduct a minimum of six local office reviews;
- Attend meetings and other activities designed to promote the cause of MSFW's as well as state, regional and national functions directed by the U.S. Department of Labor (20 CFR 653.107);
- Prepare written reports on major activities attended and local office monitoring;
- Provide required data to the Regional Employment and Training Administration office quarterly (20 CFR 653.109);
- Monitor and provide technical assistance to assist local offices to comply with Agricultural Clearance Order activity requirements (20 CFR 653 Subpart F). OSHA and ESA regulations will be interpreted for local offices and other interested parties;
- As a member of RMI Employment and Training Committee, advise on MSFW matters and coordinate local office efforts with the committee. The National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee (RMI), cooperating agencies and the Division of Workforce Development local offices will be used as a primary source for reporting apparent violations of employment related laws and,
- Distribute distributed reference material (manuals) regarding MSFW's and the Complaint system.